

Handout 1: Unit 2 Overview

It's the chance you've been waiting for—a TV, movie, or game company wants to hire an intern to help with promotional art. But you need to create some artwork to interest the company. How can you showcase your art and your capabilities?

In this unit you'll create an original illustration. Choosing symbols that you think convey an important idea for a movie, TV show, or video game, you'll design a still life and then use it as the basis for your illustration. To complete the piece, you'll employ different art techniques as you refine your design and artwork.

Your work in this unit will revolve around the following questions:

- *Is a picture worth a thousand words?*
- *How are visual symbols used in works of media and visual art?*
- *Why are visual symbols so powerful?*

Unit Project

Your starting point is the scenario described above: imagine that the marketing division of a game development company or a TV or movie studio is accepting applications for interns, and you need an original illustration to use for your application. With this in mind, for your unit project you will create a promotional illustration for a media product (a video game, movie, or TV show). To create your illustration you will first choose a product that interests you, then select and arrange objects that you think symbolize an important aspect of the product, and finally, draw a still life using the objects. You will also design a logo for stationery that you could use in your internship application.

What You Will Do in This Unit

Explore symbols in everyday life. Explore symbols in artwork, advertisements, traffic signals, buildings, movies—even graffiti and tattooing. What do these symbols convey? How are they used in different times and cultures? How do symbols communicate social values and ideas in the context of marketing?

Set up a still life. Choose objects—anything from lamps to sneakers, rocks to food—as symbols to convey an idea in a movie, TV show, or video game of your choice. Thumbnail sketches will serve as memory and planning tools as you experiment with framing, space, and texture to create a final still-life design.

Create an illustration for your portfolio. Using your still-life setup, you will create a drawing to promote a media product (a movie, game, or TV show). You'll choose the media product, come up with initial ideas, do research, and experiment with artistic techniques to create your original art.

Design a logo and stationery. You'll design your own personal logo and stationery, which you could use to apply for your fictitious internship. Think about the image you want to project and how to symbolize it.

Use the Feldman method of art criticism to analyze symbolism in works of art and media. Practice your art analysis skills by discussing and writing about symbolic still lifes.

Keep a journal. Keep a journal with your assignments, notes, and sketches on the development of your ideas, research, and reflections.

Portfolio Requirements

You will create the following items to keep in your working portfolio:

- An illustration that could be part of a promotional piece for marketing a media product (a film, game, or TV show).
- Your own personal logo
- Reflections on the unit

You will also use your working portfolio to keep all your other course work—sketches, journals, class work, assignments, and writing.

Vocabulary Used in This Unit

Composition: The organization of elements in a work of art.

Form: A three-dimensional object (such as a sphere or cube) or the illusion of three dimensions.

Internship: A temporary, supervised position, usually in a professional setting, in which a student or graduate is exposed to a workplace environment and receives on-the-job training. An internship may be a paid or an unpaid position.

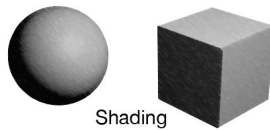
Logo: A symbol used to identify an organization. Logos are designed to be easily recognized, and are used on such materials as letterhead, advertisements, and products.



Negative space: Area that is unoccupied by objects (in 3-D work) or that represents an area unoccupied by objects (in 2-D work).

Positive space: Area that is occupied by solid objects (in 3-D work) or area that represents solid objects (in 2-D work).

Shading: The practice of using lighter and darker values to suggest three dimensions, shadow, or degrees of light and dark in a picture or drawing.



Space: The emptiness or open area between, around, above, below, or within objects. Shapes and forms are defined by the space around and within them. Conversely, spaces are defined by the shapes and forms around and within them.



Photo © Cody Orrell.

The softness of the negative space in this photo contrasts with the sharp lines of the rock and the squirrel's fur.

Still life: An arrangement, in a work of art, of a collection of inanimate objects.

Symbol: An object, picture, or other concrete representation of an idea, concept, or other abstraction.

Synopsis: A condensed summary or outline.

Texture: The surface quality of materials, either actual (felt or tactile) or implied (visual).

Value: The lightness or darkness of a hue or neutral color (such as gray).

Handout 2: Looking at Symbols

How do individuals use symbols to express their beliefs, ideas, and personal histories?
In this activity you're going to examine examples of graffiti and tattoos.

Round 1: First Glance

1. Decide who will be the recorder, the facilitator, and the presenter for your team.
 - *Recorder:* Writes down the important points brought up in the discussion.
 - *Facilitator:* Makes sure that everyone understands the directions, gets a chance to speak, and stays on topic.
 - *Presenter:* Summarizes important points of the group's discussion for the class.
2. Discuss the symbols in your packet. Make sure that each team member plays his or her assigned role. Record your team's ideas in the table on the following page.
 - In the left-hand column, list the name or label of each example you were given.
 - In the middle column, write down all the possible meanings of the symbols you see in each example.

**Name/Label
of Example**

Round 1

Why do you think this person chose to tattoo him- or herself or create this piece of graffiti?

Round 2

Did any of the statements affect your understanding of this example? If so, how?

1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

Round 2: A Second Look

1. Read **Handout 3: Statements About Symbols**, which contains opinions about tattoos and graffiti. Some of these statements are general, while some are specific to the examples you looked at.
2. Discuss whether or how these statements changed your interpretation of the examples. Write your team's observations in the right-hand column.

Handout 3

Statements About Symbols

Maori Moko

The Maori, a Polynesian people who are the first known inhabitants of the country that is now New Zealand, used Maori *moko* tattooing to mark different social classes within their society. A person's *moko* marked his or her tribal or regional affiliation. It gave the person wearing the *moko* great prestige, because it showed others that this person had endured and survived the grueling tattooing process (*mokos* were done with chisels!). In the 1850s, European missionaries attacked the practice of the *moko*, and its prevalence eventually faded. Recently, however, the practice has re-emerged among the Maori to symbolize their connection to their past in the face of the dominance of European culture in New Zealand.

"The design of my particular *moko kaiwai* is significant to my genealogy, my *whaka papa*. And incorporated in that *whaka papa* is a shark that's swimming from the Pacific to Aotearoa, which symbolizes my mother coming to New Zealand, meeting my father, and then I'm the result. And the rest of it talks about where I was born, which means two rivers. And so it's significant that there's a lot of water flowing. The particular *hapu* or sub-tribe that I belong to is *Teorewai*, which means 'to gently swivel the water so that it ripples and splashes just a little.' And then of course, I live on the edge of a lake . . . And so water figures a whole lot in this particular design. And it's a design that links me with my roots of origin and it keeps me in line."

—Manu Neho, Aotearoa (from *Skin Stories*, 2003)

Western Tattoo

"[People] ask, 'Well, why did you get a tattoo'" and then we'll give reasons. I think reasons tend to be the more superficial explanation, after the fact. There's something deeper going on. There's something far more profound and primal, and deeper to the motivation, to have one's skin, one's body [become] an artistic canvas, so to speak. And I think that that's very present, even for the young Navy personnel who might be getting that rite of passage tattoo of the little anchor, or the Marine who gets the little bulldog."

—Mary Lynn Price (from *Skin Stories*, 2003)

Yin-Yang Symbol

The yin-yang symbol, a very popular image in tattooing, comes from Chinese philosophy. It represents the opposing yet complementary aspects of the world we live in. For example, opposites such as ignorance and knowledge complement one another: One cannot become knowledgeable without first being ignorant.

Graffiti

Interview with Graffiti Artist Banksy

Banksy is a graffiti artist from England, who has shown internationally and has been termed one of the most famous graffiti artists in the world.

How long are you going to remain anonymous, working through the medium itself and through your agent as a voice for you?

B: I have no interest in ever coming out. . . . I'm just trying to make the pictures look good; I'm not into trying to make myself look good. I'm not into fashion. The pictures generally look better than I do when we're out on the street together. Plus, I obviously have issues with the cops.

What's your definition of the word graffiti?

B: I love graffiti. I love the word. Some people get hung up over it, but I think they're fighting a losing battle. Graffiti equals amazing to me. Every other type of art compared to graffiti is a step down—no two ways about it. If you operate outside of graffiti, you operate at a lower level. Other art has less to offer people, it means less, and it's weaker. I make normal paintings if I have ideas that are too complex or offensive to go out on the street, but if I ever stopped being a graffiti writer I would be gutted.

From a 2008 interview with Banksy by Shepard Fairey in *Swindle Magazine*

Interview with Graffiti Artist Barry McGee

Barry McGee is a California artist who does conventional art (drawings, paintings, and mixed-media installations inspired by contemporary urban culture). Since the 1980s McGee has also created graffiti on city streets, where he is known by the tag name "Twist."

What is the difference for you in working at a gallery, in a museum, or on the street?

BM: I think the method is the most interesting thing to me. I think in traditional art making, you come up with a good idea and you hide it and it's like, "Oh, this is a good idea, I got to really work on this." Really push this and you're like, "Oh, this is going to be good," and you prepare carefully for a gallery space, which is a pretty neutral setting. But with a lot of people that do street work, if you have a good idea, you're just like, "Oh, this is a great idea, I'm putting it out on the street tonight!" And you try to get out there as fast as you can and you know immediately the next day if it was a good idea or not.

From Barry McGee interview and videos,
Art:21—Art in the Twenty-First Century. (n.d.) Art21, Inc.

Comment from Graffiti Artist Lee Quiñones

LQ: Subways are corporate America's way of getting its people to work. And the trains were clones themselves, they were all supposed to be silver and blue, a form of imperialism and control. And we took that and completely changed it.

From *Books: American Graffiti*, by Jeff Chang in *The Village Voice*, September 2002.

Perspectives from New York City Mayors

“Look, there is a fine line here between freedom of expression and going out and encouraging people to hurt this city . . . Defacing subway cars is hardly a joke; encouraging people, kids in particular, to do that after all the money we’ve spent, all the time we’ve spent removing graffiti.”

—Mayor Michael Bloomberg in response to a block party where graffiti artists were invited to tag a model of a subway street car

From *Graffiti vs. the City (again)* by Corina Zappia in *The Village Voice*, August 2005.

“Even those who once possessed mild amusement about graffiti are becoming increasingly indignant at the damage being done . . . I know the problem is complex, but we have to roll up our sleeves and solve it. The assault on our senses and on our pocketbooks as we pay the clean-up costs must be stopped.”

—Mayor John Lindsay

From *That’s the Joint!: The Hip-Hop Studies Reader* (1st ed.) by Mark A. Neal and Murray Forman. New York: Routledge

Art vs. Eyesore

“Joey Monsoon, former graffiti writer turned illustrator and graphic artist . . . said graffiti writers should not paint on someone’s home or business without permission, but sees nothing wrong with displaying street art on public property or signs. ‘We live in an environment that is saturated with commercial advertisements on signs, billboards and buildings . . . [If] corporations and other commercial interests have the right to invade my visual space, then so do graffiti artists.’

“ . . . Ian MacConnell, community and public relations committee chair of [Ohio State University’s] University Area Commission, said that in a capitalistic society, businesses are allowed to advertise because they pay to do so. . . . MacConnell said graffiti . . . deters other businesses from setting up shop in heavily hit areas and it invites criminals by giving them the idea that residents do not care about their neighborhood.

“MacConnell works with the University Area Enrichment Association to do three graffiti clean-ups in the summer. Each tag cost \$500 in labor and supplies to remove and would not be possible without the association’s sponsorship.”

From *Graffiti: A Beautiful Crime* by Ishmael Ali Elias in *The Lantern*, March 2006

Handout 4: Unit 2 Project Description

As you analyze contemporary examples of symbolism (such as graffiti, wearable art, and advertisements), you are seeing how visual elements can represent ideas, beliefs, and values.

For the unit project, you will draw artwork for a promotional piece for a movie, TV show, or video game, and use both artistic and visual analysis skills as you find ways to symbolize the main ideas of your chosen media product.

Scenario

How do beginning artists and designers gain on-the-job experience? One way is through *internships* (work that is often unpaid), where an individual gains supervised practical experience. Imagine the following scenario:

The marketing division of a video game developer, movie studio, or TV studio is looking for interns. It's a great chance to gain experience—and you want to apply!

The application requirements include a drawn sample for a promotional piece for a media product—a video game, movie, or TV show. You will produce a sample that you can show as part of your portfolio. For the artwork, please note the following requirements:

- You will choose the product to promote (a video game, movie, or TV show).
- Your artwork must be original.
- You may only draw still lifes.
- Your work may not include any depiction of characters.
- You can create the artwork for any type of promotional piece—a Web site, an online advertising banner, a printed piece (such as a poster or billboard), the packaging for a game or a DVD, or the wallpaper for a personal computer or cell phone.

In addition to the drawing, you will design a logo for stationery you could use to apply for the internship.

Developing the Product

Step 1: Choose a media product for your still life.

Decide on the media product—the movie, TV show, or game—you want to promote, then use the questions below to identify its main ideas. Your answers will help you choose objects for your still life and design your illustration.

- What is the movie, TV show, or video game about? Write a one-paragraph synopsis (summary) of the media product you chose.

- What are one or two key events—such as a turning point or an especially dramatic scene or event—that occur? List the event or events.
- Who are the main characters, and what relationship do they have to one another? Write a brief line or two describing their relationships. (You will not draw the characters, but clearly understanding their situations might help you choose and arrange symbols for your illustration.)
- In what era is the product set?
- What particular emotion or emotions do you associate with the product? List one or two emotions that seem to especially represent this piece.

Step 2: Choose a concept and still-life objects for your illustration.

Consider the following to help you work out your ideas:

- What am I illustrating? What concept, feeling, or idea do I want to convey?
- What do I want to communicate about the media product I've chosen to promote?
- What objects will help me communicate this? How will these objects symbolize something about the movie, TV show or video game?

Step 3: Arrange your still life.

Part of illustrating an expressive still life is creating the setup. Begin by experimenting with the placement and framing of your objects. What happens when the objects are close together? Far apart? Neatly placed?

Arrange your objects at least three different ways, choosing the placement that best conveys the symbolism that you want to convey through the drawing. For example, if one of your objects is a glass of water, what different ideas or feelings could you convey by having it full, half full, or tipped over and spilled?

Step 4: Frame and compose your still life.

Use your viewfinder to experiment with different framings of your still life. *Framing* is the physical act of placing borders around your subject matter—it is part of the whole composition. (*Composition* is the way that all the elements of art and principles of design are arranged in a work; it also includes such aspects as placement of subject matter.)

- How does the visual impact of the still life change when the subject matter is tightly framed or loosely framed?
- What happens when your main subject is to the right or left of center?

Step 5: Draw your still life.

Your teacher will guide you through several steps in order to help build the drawing and observation skills you will need to complete your still life. You will do exercises where you explore the art elements of *texture*, *form*, and *value* and learn drawing techniques that will help you communicate your intended ideas for your unit project. You will then complete a draft of your illustration, receive feedback from your peers, and use this feedback to complete your illustration.

Step 6: Reflect on your work in the unit.

For the final piece of your project, you'll reflect on your work in this unit by answering the following questions:

- What were you trying to express through your promotional piece?
- How did you use symbolism to illustrate or highlight these ideas?
- How did your project help you understand symbolism in art and media?
- What else did you learn while doing this project?
- What would you do differently if you were to do this project again?
- Why would you be a good candidate for an internship at the marketing department of a game development company or a movie or TV studio?

Handout 5: Your Journal Assignments

Journal 1

Watch the movie or an episode of the TV show, or play the video game, that you have chosen to promote for your unit project. Revisit your answers to the questions in Step 1 on Handout 4, and then answer the following questions:

- How well do the objects that you selected convey the central theme or idea of the movie, TV show, or video game?
- Are there any other objects that would convey the theme or idea more effectively?

Journal 2

Here's another way to practice drawing the details of an object's texture. First, find a physical object with an interesting texture that you'd like to draw. As you draw, don't worry about creating a realistic drawing of the object; instead, focus on capturing the details of its texture. Is the object smooth, wrinkled, soft, jagged? How can you capture its texture in your drawing?

Journal 3

Before you begin drawing your still life, you'll want to practice observational drawing skills. Choose a small number of objects that you would like to draw—ones with interesting shapes and textures. Try some of the drawing techniques you learned in class. This will help you when it's time to draw your still life.

Journal 4

Reflect on the process of creating your logo by answering the questions below:

- What do you want your logo to communicate about your style of graphic design?
- How did you use the elements of art (e.g., line, texture, value, shape, space) to convey an image?

Journal 5

Choose a magazine advertisement that uses symbolism. Analyze it by answering the following questions:

- What symbols do you see in this advertisement, and what do you think they mean?
- Why do you think the marketers used these symbols to communicate their message?
- What ideas or values are being sold to us in this piece?
- Do you think this piece is successful? Why or why not?
- What techniques do the marketers use to persuade potential customers?

React, Practice, Imagine: Weekly Journal Activities

In addition to the journal assignments described above, choose one of the following three activities each week to do in your journal:

- **React**—Respond to a piece of art or media shown in class by writing about it. Then write down two questions you'd like to ask the artist about the work, and try to guess the answer to one of the questions. Write the answer in your journal.
- **Practice**—Sketch something from observation or from your imagination.
- **Imagine**—Think of an art or design project that you are interested in creating, and describe it in your journal.

Assessment Checklist 1: Unit 2 Project

Use this checklist to help you plan your project, making sure that you address all the criteria for the different components of the project.

Requirements	Percentage of Total Grade	Student Comments	Teacher Comments
Logo			
The logo successfully conveys the professional identity that the artist wants to communicate.	30%		
The logo makes effective use of line, space, and shape.	25%		
The logo has a clearly defined shape.	15%		
The lines used to create the logo are clean and distinctive.	15%		
The logo has a balanced ratio of negative and positive space.	15%		
Total	100%		

Requirements	Percentage of Total Grade	Student Comments	Teacher Comments
Illustration			
The illustration uses symbols to successfully convey an idea about a movie, TV show, or video game.	20%		
The artist creates an effective composition that takes into consideration the elements of art as well as the placement, framing, and depiction of the objects.	20%		
The illustration makes effective use of texture and space.	20%		
The illustration accurately depicts the subject matter.	20%		
The student demonstrates growth, effort, and perseverance in learning observational drawing skills.	20%		
Total	100%		

Handout 6: Analyzing Art

In this activity, you will look closely at two still lifes. This will reinforce your understanding of the elements of art and give you a chance to practice art analysis.

- With your partner, choose two still lifes to analyze.
- Use the Feldman method of art criticism and complete the table. Focus on symbolism as you interpret the artwork. (Guiding questions for the Feldman method are listed below each step in the left column.)

1. Name of the work _____

<p>Description</p> <p>What do I see?</p>	
<p>Analysis</p> <p>How is the work organized? (How are the elements of art—such as texture, value, space, and form—used in the picture?)</p>	
<p>Interpretation</p> <p>What message does this artwork communicate? What symbols can you identify in this artwork, and what do you think they mean?</p>	
<p>Judgment</p> <p>Is this a successful work of art?</p>	

2. Name of the work _____

Description

What do I see?

Analysis

How is the work organized?
(How are the elements of art—such as texture, value, space, and form—used in the picture?)

Interpretation

What message does this artwork communicate?
What symbols can you identify in this artwork, and what do you think they mean?

Judgment

Is this a successful work of art?

Handout 7: Artwork Information

The passages below describe some of the historical context of the paintings you analyzed.

For each painting you analyzed, read the passage, reread your initial analysis of that work of art, and then write down any new observations or ways of looking at the work based on this new information.

100 Cans by Andy Warhol (1962)

Andy Warhol is one of the best-known pop artists of the 20th century. *100 Cans* is one of his famous series of Campbell's soup can artworks. Pop artists like Warhol created art that featured objects of popular culture—objects that had not previously been thought of as worthy subject matter for art. The 1962 Campbell's soup can exhibition took the art world by storm. Warhol's Campbell soup can images offended critics who objected to calling a painting of a manufactured and mass-produced household item a work of art. When asked why he chose Campbell's soup cans for his paintings, Warhol said, "I used to drink it. I used to have the same lunch every day, for 20 years, I guess, the same thing over and over again." Pop artists like Warhol celebrated popular culture and used commercial techniques, such as repetition and automation, in their art.

(The Museum of Modern Art, 1962)

How does this information change or affect your analysis of the work of art?

Vanitas Still Life by Jacques de Gheyn the Elder (Dutch, 1565–1629)

The word *vanitas* is Latin, meaning "emptiness" or "meaninglessness." *Vanitas Still Life* is an example of the *vanitas* paintings that emerged in Flanders and the Netherlands in the 1600s, as a growing middle class began to patronize the arts and, at the same time, the Dutch Reformed Protestant Church banned religious iconography. (The word *iconography* refers to religious pictures and visual symbols.)

Vanitas paintings became popular because they featured rich arrangements of objects and other symbols of wealth, accompanied by reminders of mortality, such as skulls, ripe or spoiling fruit, and wilting flowers. Dutch *vanitas* paintings told a morality tale: They featured the owner's wealth and bounty, while communicating reminders of the fleeting nature of earthly pleasures and the importance of attending to the eternal afterlife.

(The Metropolitan Museum of Art, n.d.)

How does this information change or affect your analysis of the work of art?

***Dragon Pine* by Wu Boli (Ming Dynasty, ca. 1400)**

Wu Boli, a Taoist Monk, painted *Dragon Pine* for the leader of his Taoist sect. Many Taoists believe that nature illustrates the Tao, or the flow of the universe, and subjects from nature are common in artwork done in the Taoist tradition. *Dragon Pine* is rich in symbols—the pine tree symbolizes the moral character of a virtuous man, and also the Taoist sage or “perfected being.” According to Taoist beliefs, vital energies collect at the base of a mountain slope along the edge of a stream—precisely the location of the pine in Wu Boli’s painting. In addition, in Chinese tradition the pine tree is a symbol of longevity and of constancy in the face of adversity.

The pictographic nature of Chinese writing has had a large impact on the visual arts in China. The Chinese written language is composed of symbols—unique characters that correspond to a word. This may be why *Dragon Pine*, like other examples of Chinese painting, features Chinese calligraphy as part of the painting.

(The Metropolitan Museum of Art, n.d.)

How does this information change or affect your analysis of the work of art?

Assessment Checklist 2: Analyzing Art

Use this assessment to help you plan and assess your work. Make sure that you address all the criteria. Your teacher will use this assessment to help evaluate your work.

Requirements	Percentage of Total Grade	Student Comments	Teacher Comments
Student successfully works with partner to complete the assignment.	15%		
Student pair uses the Feldman method to:			
<i>Describe</i> two symbolic artworks, focusing on visual characteristics of the works.	15%		
<i>Analyze</i> two symbolic artworks, focusing on how elements of art are used in the works.	15%		
<i>Interpret</i> two symbolic artworks, focusing on what the works communicate.	15%		
<i>Judge</i> two symbolic artworks, focusing on whether or not the works are successful, and why you think so.	15%		
Student pair uses the information provided to inform the interpretation of the symbolism in the two works of art.	25%		
Total	100%		

Handout 8: Drawing Texture

In this activity, you and your teammates will explore the texture of several objects, following the steps outlined below.

1. Choose an object from your still-life setup for your teammates to draw. Be sure to keep this object hidden from your team members (using the paper bag or other concealment method provided by your teacher).
2. When it is your turn, describe the texture of your chosen object. (For example, if you are holding a whistle you might describe the texture as *smooth* and *hard*.) Be as specific as possible in your description of the texture, without saying anything else about the object. Your teammates will try to draw the texture of your object without seeing it or knowing what it is.
3. Your team members will also have a turn describing the texture of their chosen objects for the rest of the team to draw.
4. After each team member has had a turn, reveal your objects to one another.

Handout 9: Creating Your Logo

When designers apply for professional positions, such as internships, they often create personal logos for their business cards, Web sites, and stationery, to demonstrate their ability as designers. In this activity, you will design your own logo that you could use to apply to an internship. Follow the three steps below: plan, draw, and reflect.

Plan

Answer the following questions to help you think about design ideas for your logo:

- What image do you want to project with your logo?
- How could your logo symbolize the image you want to project (e.g., lettering, choice of image)?
- How might design considerations for a logo be different from the design considerations for the tattoos and graffiti you looked at in the beginning of the unit?

Draw

Create your logo. Feel free to experiment, and don't be discouraged if your first efforts aren't exactly as you envisioned—just keep working until you have a design that you are satisfied with.

Reflect

Answer the questions posed in Journal 4 to reflect on the creation of your logo.

More About Logo Design: Behind the MTV2 Logo

As you work on your logo, you might be interested in the thinking behind the creation of the MTV2 logo.

- In 2006, the cable station MTV2 wanted to change the perception that it was an extension of the popular cable music station MTV. In order to redefine its image to appeal to its target audience, the network chose another logo that was radically different from that of its parent company, MTV.
- An executive at MTV2, described the company's logo as follows:
"Freaky and outrageous, this feral creature defines the untamed nature of MTV2. The two-headed dog boldly tells everyone what to expect from us: a new mindset and style; the real and the ridiculous; a bold, unapologetic and funny new offering. Unexpected, sometimes shocking, unpredictable and unruly define the new MTV2."

From *MTV2 Logo*, AIGA Design Archives. 2006.

Handout 10: Unit 2 Career Information

Below are some of the AME careers that make use of the skills you're learning in Unit 2:

- Design assistant
- Design manager
- Graphic designer
- Icon designer
- Illustrator
- Interface designer
- Logo designer
- Photo editor
- Photo stylist
- Production artist
- Production assistant

Key Careers

Illustrator

Illustrators interpret and communicate ideas and texts using visual images. They need to be very good at drawing in a variety of media (such as pencil, watercolor, or acrylic). Often, illustrators will do a series of sketches to show their ideas to clients. They also conduct research into the subject(s) of their artwork. Illustrators should have a good understanding of the audiences for their media, and know how to create images that can be used to convey information or incite emotion. For example, an illustrator might be hired to create the artwork for a movie poster: The illustrator first researches information about the plot and main characters, and then creates images designed to convey ideas that will interest the intended audience for the movie.

As media trends and needs change, illustrators are finding opportunities in digital media. Illustrators may use software to create art for Web banners or animations as well as artwork for posters or TV advertisements. Illustrators also create illustrations for media, such as magazine or newspaper stories, books or book jackets, clothing prints, brochures, and business presentations and proposals.

The work of an illustrator may seem similar to that of a graphic designer, and, in fact, many companies look for designers who can do both graphic design *and* illustration. The main difference between illustration and graphic design is that while graphic designers communicate information using layout, text, and graphics, illustrators are responsible for creating visual images, such as pictures or drawings.

Pathway: An illustrator is generally expected to have either a two-year illustration certificate or a four-year degree in fine arts with an illustration or design focus. Employers and clients look for illustrators with outstanding portfolios that show artistic skill and excellent visual communication. Many employers and clients also look for illustrators with experience in a variety of media, or illustrators who know

specific types of software. Freelance illustrators may promote their own art, or they may work with artists' representatives ("reps") or agencies to promote their work.

Illustrators may be employed by large organizations or studios (such as advertising agencies or design studios), but they most commonly work as freelancers. (A *freelancer* is a person who contracts to do independent jobs—also called *gigs* or *services*—for different employers, without a long-term commitment with one employer.) Though some illustrators explore other types of design careers, most freelance for years, adding experience and prestige to their portfolios.

Logo Designer

Logo designers create logos for clients. A logo designer must get a sense of the style desired by the client, and, through logo graphics and typography design, visually convey the feeling that the client wishes to express. Logo designers may use such resources as existing logos, guides that show color schemes already in use, and verbal and written ideas provided by clients. They may also conduct research into client organizations and products.

Some clients want specialized versions of their logos—such as animated logos for Web sites as well as logos for their company stationery—so logo designers may need some animation skills along with traditional and digital drawing and design skills. Logo designers may also create other types of graphics, such as icons. (An *icon* is a small image or symbol that functions as an informative label—for example, a picture of a folder that indicates where files are kept on a computer hard drive, or a picture of a TV on a Web site that lets a user open a video.)

Pathway: As in many other types of design work, a two-year design certificate or a four-year degree with a design focus will help logo designers build portfolios and gain experience. The portfolios of logo designers must show a variety of polished logo designs, as designers are expected to show samples of previous work to compete with other designers or design firms for work. Logo designers usually freelance, but may also work in-house for companies that specialize in logo design.

Logo design is considered a type of graphic design. Logo and icon design are not done just by logo design specialists, but often by graphic designers, Web designers, and interface designers. (*Interface designers* create the visual features that people interact with on Web sites and video games, such as buttons and menus to aid navigation.) For more information about graphic design pathways, see the career profile of **graphic designers** in Unit 1.

Photo Stylist

Photo stylists prepare sets and compose materials for photo shoots. They create the “look” of commercial photographs—they plan the elements that give photos visual impact. Photo stylists interpret concepts from clients or directors and present ways that ideas and moods can be realized through set design and composition. They work closely with photo studio coordinators, photographers, and art directors. They need a strong understanding of design, composition, color, photography, and lighting. They also need to have up-to-date knowledge of social trends. Many stylists specialize in such areas as editorial, lifestyle, fashion, or food photography.

The work of a photo stylist can be physically demanding: They may have to build sets or set additions, arrange fabrics, paint or obtain background pictures and props, and find and coordinate transportation for objects or set requirements. Photo stylists have to watch budgets carefully, and will often borrow or rent materials. They also must know how to imitate the look of objects or materials on a set in order to provide a particular look without high costs. For example, a photo stylist might create a faux gold finish for plastic props rather than obtaining actual gold objects. In addition, a photo stylist may assist with lighting design and may help cast models.

Pathway: Photo stylists are often expected to have a two-year or four-year fine arts or design degree. They need a good understanding of photography and lighting. They may also be required to have experience in sculpture, sewing, painting, set construction, or merchandising. Photo stylists may gain experience through internships with art departments or photo studios, or through making props and painting sets for theater or movie productions. Photo stylists need to have strong portfolios, showing a range of work in specialty areas.

Most clients expect photo stylists to have experience, which many photo stylists obtain by assisting other stylists on sets and by doing *test work* (free work for a new organization that may not be able to afford a professional stylist but will cover the costs of materials). Photo stylists may freelance or may be employed by photo studios or large organizations. Photo stylists may go on to become creative directors or style directors.